

Washington speak for tax hikes and it is absurd.

First of all, is there anyone outside of Washington, DC, who really thinks that with 14 million people looking for work in this country, the solution is to raise taxes? The last thing you want to do in the middle of a jobs crisis is raise taxes. Does anyone seriously think that is a good idea? Even the President has said as much. It is just common sense. Remember, the President signed the extension of current tax rates back in December with a similar argument.

But even if we weren't in the middle of a jobs crisis, it would be foolish—and completely dishonest. We are in the middle of a debt crisis right now because we spend too much. The solution is to spend less.

How do we know this?

For 30 years beginning in 1971, Federal spending as a percentage of the economy has averaged around 20.8 percent. But after 2 years of out-of-control spending by the President and his Democrat allies in Congress, government spending is now projected to rise a full 4 percentage points above the historical norm.

That may not sound like a lot, but 4 percent of a \$14 trillion economy is an enormous amount of money. Just as the economy sank, Democrats increased government spending by hundreds of billions of dollars. And now they want to make it permanent. That is the reason we have a deficit like we do.

Government spending has gone up, and a bad economy has caused revenue to go down.

That is the reason the debt has gone up 35 percent since the President took office.

Now Democrats want to use that bad economy as an excuse to lock their spending levels in place. They want to use it as an excuse to raise taxes, which would only make the economy worse, cause us to lose even more jobs, and make it even harder to create new jobs.

So let's just be clear about what is going on here. Right now, Washington is borrowing roughly \$4 billion every day above what it collects in taxes. And Democrats don't want to admit we have a spending problem?

We have a national debt the size of our entire economy and Democrats are wondering whether they want to do anything about the biggest drivers of the debt?

Look: Democrats can continue to argue among themselves about whether to step up and address this crisis they have helped create, but they can't argue about what is causing it or what is needed to address it.

Republicans have been crystal clear about where we stand. And Democrats have also been crystal clear about what's needed for these talks to be a success. It is my hope that they consider their own past statements on entitlement reform as we approach the end of these talks.

The path to success is clear. Let's not let this opportunity to do something go to waste.

I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

The Senator from Arizona.

#### LIBYA

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I rise to join the Senator from Massachusetts, who will shortly submit the product of many hours of bipartisan cooperation and negotiation, an authorization for the limited use of military force in Libya. The resolution, as will be introduced by my colleague from Massachusetts, as I mentioned, would authorize the President to employ the U.S. Armed Forces to advance U.S. national security interests in Libya as part of the international coalition that is enforcing U.N. Security Council resolutions in Libya. It would limit this authority to 1 year, which is more than enough time to finish the job, and it makes clear that the Senate agrees with the President that there is no need and no desire to commit U.S. conventional ground forces in Libya.

I will be the first to admit that this authorization is not perfect and it will not make everyone happy. It does not fully make me happy. I would have preferred that this authorization make clear that our military mission includes the President's stated policy objective of forcing Qadhafi to leave power. I would have preferred that it urge the President to commit more U.S. strike aircraft to the mission in Libya so as to help bring this conflict to a close as soon as possible. And I would have preferred that it call on the President to recognize the Transitional National Council as the legitimate voice of the Libyan people so as to free Qadhafi's frozen assets for the Transitional National Council to use on behalf of the Libyan people. I have called on the administration to do all of these things for some time, and I do so now again.

That said, this authorization has been a bipartisan effort. My Republican colleagues and I have had to make compromises, just as have the Senator from Massachusetts and his Democratic colleagues. I believe the end re-

sult is an authorization that deserves the support of my colleagues in the Senate on both sides of the aisle, and I am confident they will support it.

I know the administration has made it clear that it believes it does not need a congressional authorization such as this because it is their view that U.S. military operations in Libya do not rise to the level of hostility. I believe this assertion will strike most of my colleagues and the Americans they represent as a confusing breach of common sense, and it seems to be undercut by the very report the administration sent to Congress which makes clear that U.S. Armed Forces have been and presumably will continue to fly limited strike missions to suppress enemy air defenses, to operate armed Predator drones that are attacking Qadhafi's forces in an effort to protect Libyan civilians, and to provide the overwhelming support for NATO operations, from intelligence to aerial refueling. Indeed, we read in today's New York Times that since the April 7 date that the administration claims to have ceased hostilities in Libya, U.S. warplanes have struck at Libyan air defenses on 60 occasions and fired about 30 missiles from unmanned drones.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks the article from today's New York Times entitled "Scores of U.S. Strikes in Libya Follow Handoff to Libya."

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. MCCAIN. I certainly agree that actions such as these do not amount to a full-fledged state of war, and I will certainly grant that I am no legal scholar, but I find it hard to swallow that U.S. Armed Forces dropping bombs and killing enemy personnel in a foreign country does not amount to a state of hostilities.

What is worse, this is just the latest way in which this administration has mishandled its responsibility with regard to Congress. The President could have asked to authorize our intervention in Libya months ago, and I believe it could have received a strong, though certainly not unanimous, show of support.

The administration's disregard for the elected representatives of the American people on this matter has been troubling and counterproductive. The unfortunate result of this failure of leadership is plain to see in the full-scale revolt against the administration's Libya policy that is occurring in the House of Representatives. As I speak now, our colleagues in the House are preparing a measure that would cut off all funding for U.S. military operations in Libya, and they plan to vote on it in the coming days.

I know many were opposed to this mission from the beginning, and I respect their convictions. I myself have disagreed and disagreed strongly at

times with aspects of the administration's policy in Libya. But at the end of the day, I believe the President did the right thing by intervening to stop a looming humanitarian disaster in Libya.

Amid all our arguments over prudence, legality, and constitutionality of the administration's policy in Libya, we cannot forget the main point: In the midst of the most groundbreaking geopolitical event in two decades, as peaceful protests for democracy were sweeping the Middle East, with Qadhafi's forces ready to strike at the gates of Benghazi and with Arabs and Muslims in Libya and across the region pleading for the U.S. military to stop the bloodshed, the United States and our allies took action and prevented the massacre Qadhafi had promised to commit in a city of 700,000 people. By doing so, we began creating conditions that are increasing the pressure on Qadhafi to give up power.

Yes, the progress toward this goal has been slower than many had hoped and the administration is doing less to achieve it than I and others would like, but the bottom line is this: We are succeeding, Qadhafi is weakening. His military leaders and closest associates are abandoning him. NATO is increasing the tempo of its operations and degrading Qadhafi's military capabilities and command and control. The Transitional National Council is gaining international recognition and support and performing more effectively, and though their progress is uneven, opposition forces in Libya are making strategic gains on the ground.

We are all entitled to our opinions about Libya policy, but here are the facts. Qadhafi is going to fall. It is just a matter of time. So I ask my colleagues, is this the time for Congress to turn against this policy? Is this the time to ride to the rescue of a failing tyrant when the writing is on the wall that he will collapse? Is this the time for Congress to declare to the world, to Qadhafi and his inner circle, to all of the Libyans who are sacrificing to force Qadhafi from power, and to our NATO allies who are carrying a far heavier burden in this military operation than we are—is this the time for America to tell all of these different audiences that our heart is not in this, that we have neither the will nor the capability to see this mission through, that we will abandon our closest friends and allies on a whim? These are the questions every Member of Congress needs to think about long and hard but especially my Republican colleagues.

Many of us remember well the way some of our friends on the other side of the aisle savaged President Bush over the Iraq war and how they sought to do everything in their power to tie his hands and pull America out of that conflict. We were right to condemn that behavior then, and we would be wrong to practice it now ourselves simply because the leader of the opposite

party occupies the White House. Someday—I hope soon—a Republican will again occupy the White House, and that President may need to commit U.S. armed forces to hostilities. So if my Republican colleagues are indifferent to how their actions would affect this President, I would urge them to think seriously about how a vote to cut off funding for this military operation can come back to haunt a future President when the shoe is on the other foot.

The House of Representatives will have its say on our involvement in Libya this week. The Senate has been silent for too long. It is time for the Senate to speak, and when that time comes I believe we will find a strong bipartisan majority in favor of authorizing our current military operations in Libya and seeing this mission through to success. That is the message Qadhafi needs to hear; it is a message Qadhafi's opponents, fighting to liberate their nation, need to hear; and it is a message America's friends and allies need to hear.

So let's debate this authorization, but then let's vote on it as soon as possible.

I wish to thank my colleague from Massachusetts for his hard work on this resolution. I understand he will be submitting it very soon. I hope the majority leader of the Senate will schedule a debate and vote on this resolution as soon as possible. It is long overdue.

#### EXHIBIT 1

[From the New York Times, June 20, 2011]  
SCORES OF U.S. STRIKES IN LIBYA FOLLOWED  
HANDOFF TO NATO

(By Charlie Savage and Thom Shanker)

WASHINGTON.—Since the United States handed control of the air war in Libya to NATO in early April, American warplanes have struck at Libyan air defenses about 60 times, and remotely operated drones have fired missiles at Libyan forces about 30 times, according to military officials.

The most recent strike from a piloted United States aircraft was on Saturday, and the most recent strike from an American drone was on Wednesday, the officials said.

While the Obama administration has regularly acknowledged that American forces have continued to take part in some of the strike sorties, few details about their scope and frequency have been made public.

The unclassified portion of material about Libya that the White House sent to Congress last week, for example, said "American strikes are limited to the suppression of enemy air defense and occasional strikes by unmanned Predator" drones, but included no numbers for such strikes.

The disclosure of such details could add texture to an unfolding debate about the merits of the Obama administration's legal argument that it does not need Congressional authorization to continue the mission because United States forces are not engaged in "hostilities" within the meaning of the War Powers Resolution.

Under that 1973 law, presidents must end unauthorized deployments 60 days after notifying Congress that they have introduced American forces into actual or imminent hostilities. That deadline for the Libyan mission appeared to pass on May 20, but the administration contended that the deadline did not apply because the United States' role

had not risen to the level of "hostilities," at least since it handed control of the mission over to NATO.

In support of that argument, the administration has pointed to a series of factors, noting, for example, that most of the strikes have been carried out by allies, while the United States has primarily been playing "non-kinetic" supporting roles like refueling and surveillance. It has also said there is little risk of American casualties because there are no ground troops and Libyan forces have little ability to exchange fire with American aircraft. And it noted that the mission is constrained from escalating by a United Nations Security Council resolution.

The special anti-radar missiles used to suppress enemy air defenses are usually carried by piloted aircraft, not drones, and the Pentagon has regularly said that American military aircraft have continued to conduct these missions. Still, officials have been reluctant to release the exact numbers of strikes.

Under military doctrine, strikes aimed at suppressing air defenses are typically considered to be defensive actions, not offensive. On the other hand, military doctrine also considers the turning on of air-defense radar in a no-fly zone to be a "hostile act." It is not clear whether any of the Libyan defenses were made targets because they had turned on such radar.

The administration's legal position prompted internal controversy. Top lawyers at the Justice Department and the Pentagon argued that the United States' military activities did amount to "hostilities" under the War Powers Resolution, but President Obama sided with top lawyers at the State Department and the White House who contended that they did not cross that threshold.

On Monday, Jay Carney, the White House press secretary, acknowledged the internal debate, but defended the judgment made by Mr. Obama, noting that the applicability of the War Powers Resolution to deployments has repeatedly prompted debate over the years.

The House of Representatives may vote later this week on a proposal to cut off funding for the Libya mission. The proposal is backed by an odd-bedfellows coalition of antiwar liberals and Tea Party Republicans.

They are opposed by an equally unusual alignment of Democrats who support the White House and the intervention in Libya, and more hawkish Republicans.

On Monday, a group that includes prominent neoconservative figures—including Liz Cheney, Robert Kagan, William Kristol and Paul Wolfowitz—sent Republicans an open letter opposing efforts to cut off funds for the mission.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I see another colleague who is waiting for time. I ask unanimous consent to proceed for such time as I might use, but it won't be much over 10 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KERRY. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, I wish to thank the Senator from Arizona for his important and courageous comments that run counter to the political currents of the day, some of which have been expressed in the other body and elsewhere. I thank him for thinking about the strategic interests of the country ahead of some of the political interests with respect to the next election.

There have been many occasions when this body has behaved very differently when a President, either Republican or Democrat, has engaged American forces in one way or another without authorization within that 60-day—or even outside of the 60-day—parameter of the War Powers Act. The fact is, we have had a number of military actions—Panama, Libya in 1986, Grenada in 1983, Iran in 1980, Haiti in 1993, the Persian Gulf in 1987 to 1988, Lebanon in 1982, and then subsequently Kosovo in 1999, Bosnia in 1992, Somalia in 1992—which didn't have this fight about authorization.

In fact, only Iraq in 2003, Afghanistan in 2001, and Iraq in 1990 were authorized prior to our engagement. The fact is, four of those I mentioned ended before the 60 days had expired, but the others didn't. Bosnia, Kosovo, and Somalia all went beyond 60 days, and the issue was never raised. So I think it is important for us to put this in context, if you will, and to measure some of the realities and the choices we face with respect to Libya today.

We will shortly this morning—a little later—be submitting this resolution. It is a bipartisan resolution. Democrats and Republicans are joining together to put in a very limited authorization with respect to our engagement in a support role—not any direct engagement but a support role only—and it is limited to that support role.

I am particularly familiar with the debate relating to, and with the War Powers Act itself, over these years because that was a debate that took place specifically in response to the war that Senator McCain and I were both a part of—the Vietnam war. The War Powers Act was a direct reaction to that war which was at that time the longest war in our history, until now—Afghanistan—10 years in duration. Over 58,000 Americans lost their lives, and it spanned several administrations, including Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon. The fact is, as a result of that war in which we never declared war, the Congress wanted to assert its appropriate prerogatives with respect to the declaration of war and the engagement of American forces. So the War Powers Act was passed.

The War Powers Act very specifically created this dynamic where the Congress had 60 days to act. The President could deploy troops for a period of 60 days without their action, and if they hadn't acted, the inaction itself would

require a President to then withdraw troops. So it didn't actually require the Congress to act, but it created this 60-day period. The fact is, any Member of Congress during those 60 days could bring a resolution to the floor denying the President the right to go forward. Nobody did that in the past 60 days, I am glad to say, and we are now beyond those 60 days.

It is not without precedent, incidentally, that we have authorized an action much later. In fact, I think one action was specifically authorized for about a year, and that was the action in Lebanon. About a year after they had landed it was authorized. So we are within days of that in terms of this discussion.

Let me read specifically what the War Powers Act says. It says:

In the absence of a declaration of war, in any case in which the United States Armed Forces are introduced into hostilities or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances. . . .

I think the operative words, the critical words, are "United States Armed Forces are introduced into hostilities."

Now, one could argue, as people are—there is an article in the Washington Post today, and there are other articles where people are saying: Well, of course we are in hostilities. Hostilities are taking place. Bombs are being dropped. But that is not, in my judgment, even though I support the War Powers Act—and President Obama, incidentally, has supported it here, which is unique from other Presidents—but the fact is, just because hostilities are taking place and we are supporting people engaged in those hostilities does not mean we are ourselves, in fact, introducing troops into hostilities.

No American is being shot at. No American troop is on the ground or contemplated being put on the ground. So the mere fact that others are engaged in hostilities and we are supporting them I don't believe automatically triggers what was contemplated in the aftermath of the Vietnam war.

Frankly, that is not the principal argument we need to be having. What we need to be doing is looking at the bigger picture. I don't think any country—the United States, the U.N., or any nation—ought to be drawn lightly into any kind of military intervention. I have always argued that. But, in my judgment, there were powerful reasons the United States should have joined in establishing the no-fly zone over Libya and forcing Qadhafi to keep his most potent weapons out of the fight.

If we slice through the fog of misinformation and weigh the risks and the benefits alongside our values and our interests, which are always at stake, I think the justification for the President's involvement, for our country's involvement, and for our supporting it are compelling, and I think they are clear.

What is happening in the Middle East right now could be the single most im-

portant geostrategic shift since the fall of the Berlin Wall. It has profound implications for U.S. expenditures and for U.S. military engagement in other parts of the region. It has significant impact on the threats we will face, on the potential strategic risks for our country, and for our interests in terms of that region.

Absent United Nations-NATO resolve, the promise that the prodemocracy movement holds for transforming the Arab world—the whole Arab world—and all it could mean for the United States in terms of hopes for peace between Israel and Palestine, hopes for a different set of relationships, hopes for restraining Wahabism, hopes for diminishing the levels of religious extremism, hopes for reducing the amount of terrorism—all of those things are contained in this awakening, in this transformation people are trying to achieve. It is an effort which I and others believe would have been crushed if the hopes of the prodemocracy movement were simply ignored and we turned our backs on them.

I can't imagine—just think about the consequences. Colonel Qadhafi says: I am going to show no mercy. I am going to go and kill those dogs—dogs—who have risen up and expressed their desire to have fundamental freedoms and rights. He is going to go into Benghazi and he is going to annihilate anybody who is in opposition to him. We already saw him pulling people out of hospital beds. We already saw him attacking women—using rape as a tool of war—dishonoring people in the Muslim world as a consequence for life. We saw what he was doing.

Are we really serious that in the wake of the gulf states, in an unprecedented request saying to us: We want your help; in the wake of the Arab League in an unprecedented request asking for U.S. and other Western engagement in their part of the world to stand up for these rights, that we would simply say: Too bad, so sad, go about your business, we have better things to do?

The consequences would have been extraordinary. Remember, President Clinton said his greatest regret of his Presidency was he didn't engage in Rwanda and prevent—which we could have done at very low cost—what happened with the genocide in Rwanda. That is his greatest regret.

How many Senators have gone to Israel and gone somewhere else in the world and said to people with respect to the Holocaust: Never again; never again. Do the words only apply to one group of people or do the words have meaning in terms of genocide, in terms of wanton killing of innocent people at the hands of a dictator?

So what is the cost to us of this great effort? I believe other dictators would have seen the failure to challenge Qadhafi as a complete license to act with impunity against their people at any other place.

The vast majority of the protesters in these countries are simply crying out for the opportunity to live a decent life, get a job, provide for a family, have opportunities, and have rights. I think abandoning them would have betrayed not only the people seeking democratic freedoms, but it would have abandoned the core values of our country. And I can hear now—I can hear it. Some of the same people now who are complaining about the President being involved would have been the first people at the barricade complaining about why the United States did not stand up for our values and how feckless the President was that he was not willing to stop a dictator from coming at these innocent people. You can hear it. Everybody in the country knows that is exactly where we would be.

Now, why there and not in Syria? A legitimate question. There are different interests and different capacities. The reality is, the Gulf States asked us to come in. The Arab League asked us to come in. And we knew whom we were dealing with with respect to the council and the players. There is a whole set of uncertainties with respect to Syria, even today, that distinguish it both in terms of what we can assert and what we can achieve, and sometimes both in foreign policy and in domestic policy you are limited to what you can achieve and to what is doable in a certain situation.

I believe if we had simply turned our backs, as some people are now arguing we ought to do now, which would be the most reckless thing I have ever heard in my life—at a moment where people are actually achieving the goals, where the pressures are mounting, where Qadhafi is less able to maneuver, where his forces have been reduced, where many people in our intelligence community and in the NATO intelligence community are saying there is progress being made and the vice is tightening—that we would suddenly just pull the rug out from under that is extraordinary to me. Snatch—snatch—defeat from the jaws of victory. I believe—I cannot tell you when it might happen, but I am absolutely confident it is going to happen—Qadhafi is finished. Ask the people in the country. Even his own supporters are reacting out of fear. And the truth is, the vice is tightening because every day that goes by, the opposition gets stronger; every day that goes by, he has less ability to manage the affairs of the country itself.

I think if we simply send the message the House of Representatives is contemplating today, it would be a moment of infamy, frankly, with respect to the House and with respect to our interests because it would reinforce the all too common misperception on the Arab street that America says one thing and does another.

We are already spending billions of dollars in the fight against extremism in many parts of the world. We did not choose this fight. Everybody knows

that. It was forced on us, starting with 9/11. To fail to see the opportunity of affirming the courageous demand of millions of disenfranchised young people who had been the greatest recruits for al-Qaida for the extremism, for any of the extremist groups—to not affirm their quest now to try to push back against repression and oppression and to try to open a set of opportunities for themselves for jobs, for respect, for democracy—I think to turn our backs on that would be ignorant, irresponsible, shortsighted, and dangerous for our country. It would ignore our real national security interests, and it would help extend the narrative of resentment toward the United States and much of the West that is rooted in colonialism and furthered by our own invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Remember, the pleas for help did not just come from the Libyan rebels. And this is not something we just cooked up here at home with some desire to go get engaged somewhere. It came from the Arab League, which has never before asked for this kind of assistance. It came from the Gulf States, which have never before said to the West: We need your help to come intervene.

Even at the hand of their own leader, it seems to me that if we had silently accepted the deaths of Muslims, we would have set back our relations for decades. Instead, by responding and giving the popular uprising a chance to take power, I think the United States and our allies send a message of solidarity with the aspirations of people everywhere, and I believe that will be remembered for generations.

The particular nature of the madman who was vowing to “show no mercy” to his own people, to his own fellow Muslims, the particular nature of this man, who was going to go after the “dogs” who dared to challenge him, and his role in the past, I believe, mandated that we respond. And we responded in a stunningly limited way.

I do think our colleagues from New Jersey and New York and other States in New England need to reflect on the fact—they do not really need a reminder, I suspect—that Qadhafi is the man who was behind the bombing of Pan Am 103, claiming the lives of 189 Americans.

The intervention in Libya, in my judgment, sends a critical signal to other leaders in the region that they cannot automatically assume they can simply resort to large-scale violence to put down legitimate demands for reform without any consequences. I think U.N. resolve in Libya can have an impact on future calculations. Indeed, I think the leaders of Iran need to pay close attention to the resolve that is exhibited by the international community, and we need to think about that resolve in the context of our interests in Iran.

The resolution we will submit—Senator McCain and myself and other Senators—is absolutely not a blank check for the President. Not at all. It is a res-

olution that authorizes limited use of American forces in a supporting role. I want to emphasize that. There is only an authorization for a supporting role. It says specifically that the Senate does not support the use of ground troops in Libya. The President has stated that is his policy, but we adopt that policy in this resolution. It authorizes the limited use of American forces for a limited duration, and it would expire 1 year from the time of authorization.

This resolution envisions action consistent with the letter the President sent to congressional leaders on May 20 in which he specified that the U.S. participation in Libya has consisted of nonkinetic support of the NATO-led operation, including intelligence, logistical support, and search and rescue missions.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has used 20 minutes.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I think I asked for such time as I would use, but I will try to tighten it up.

The administration informed Congress last week it does not consider the use of U.S. forces to rise to the level of “hostilities.” I have already discussed that. I think there is an important constitutional question here, but it is not a new question. The truth is that Presidents—Democratic and Republican—have undertaken limited military action. I mentioned each of those instances.

I think this debate is healthy, but the words we use about it have consequences. They send a message. And I think none of us should send any message to Colonel Qadhafi lightly. The last message any U.S. Senator wants to send, in my judgment, is that all he has to do is wait us out, all he has to do is wait for the Congress—even as the progress is being made and the vice is tightening—because we are divided at home.

I believe passage of this resolution would be an important step in showing the country and the rest of the world and particularly showing Muammar Qadhafi that the Congress of the United States and the President of the United States are committed to this critical endeavor. I firmly believe the country is on the strongest footing when the President and the Congress speak with one voice on foreign policy matters. So I hope our colleagues will support this resolution.

For 60 years, we have been working to build a cohesive and consistent alliance with our partners in NATO. Many times our military and political leaders have complained that our European allies have not carried their share of the burden; that Americans have paid too high a price in blood and treasure; that we have led while others followed. Earlier this month, Secretary Gates warned that the NATO alliance is at risk because of European penny-pinching and distaste for front-line combat. He said the United States was not going to carry the alliance as a charity

case. Well, here is the alliance leading. Here is the alliance doing what we have wanted them to do for years. And here, all of a sudden, are Members of Congress suggesting it is OK to pull the rug out from under that alliance. I think that would really toll the bell for NATO.

I believe we need to see the realities of the strategic interests that are on the table and proceed. Will we stand up for our values and our interests at the same time? Will we support the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people? I think our own security ultimately will be strengthened immeasurably if we can assist them to transition to a democracy. The cost now will be far, far less than the cost in the future if we lose our resolve now.

I thank my colleague for his generous allowance of the extra time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. SHAHEEN). The Senator from Nebraska.

### HEALTH CARE

Mr. JOHANNIS. Madam President, over a year ago now, the President signed into law health care legislation that we are finding is certainly long on promises but short on sound policy. Unfortunately, the legislation did not follow a transparent or thorough process. Instead, it was hastily rushed through on a premise that has now become famous, as said by Speaker PELOSI: We have to pass it to see what is in it. Now, almost daily, newspapers, constituent mail, and independent reports continue to reveal that the law's promises are not reality.

Recently, the Columbus Dispatch told the story of a family with a pre-existing condition. Two years ago, their struggles to find health insurance coverage outraged this administration. In fact, their hardship was specifically used as an example of why we needed to get the health care system reformed. Well, party affiliation did not define how we felt about this family. We all empathized and sympathized with their struggles and recognized the need for basic health insurance reforms. But, unfortunately, we did not harness that common ground to develop sound policy that addresses the very real problems within the health care system. Instead, a bitterly partisan bill was shoved through Congress, and now we are stuck with its consequences.

So what are the consequences for the family who struggled to get insurance? The article reports that their annual premium has increased a whopping \$12,000. Clearly, one result of the law is soaring premiums. President Obama promised no fewer than 20 times that he would cut premiums by \$2,500 for the average family by the end of his term. But, unfortunately, this is not an isolated story. This broken promise is evident in homes all across this great Nation. Mail from frustrated Nebraskans continues to flood my office. They question how a health care law that costs so much yet still allows sky-

rocketing premiums could have ever passed.

A single mother from Bellevue, NE, recently found out that her family's health care premium increased by \$700 per year. Her insurance provider explained it was due to mandates in the new health care law.

She pleaded with me:

Please stand up on behalf of single moms like me. We do all we can to hold our world together, give up time with our children to work two jobs . . . and now this! How am I supposed to maintain health insurance for my family?

Well, I wish I could tell constituents their premiums will not go up, as the President promised. I wish I could tell them the new health care law addressed the rising costs of health care, as the President promised it would. Instead, these stories reflect what the experts predicted would happen if the law passed. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated that individual health insurance premiums would increase by an average of \$2,100 per family due solely to the new mandates included in the law. That puts the gap between Candidate Obama's promise and President Obama's health care law at an alarming \$4,600 per family.

The administration's own Medicare Actuary expects health care costs to increase \$311 billion over the next decade under the new law. In fact, the Actuary testified that the President's promise that the health care law would lower costs was "false, more so than true."

Now, some may say: MIKE, just wait until the law is fully implemented. That is when the promises will be fulfilled. But I continue to get reports on my desk forecasting the negative consequences of this irresponsible and shortsighted piece of legislation.

For example, one of the law's major flaws is that about half of its new health insurance coverage is achieved by locking millions of more people on an already-broken Medicaid system.

Yet the New England Journal of Medicine recently released a study showing those on Medicaid struggle to find doctors to treat them.

The medical journal's research revealed that 66 percent of individuals who mentioned Medicaid's Children Health Insurance Program when calling to schedule a medical appointment were denied an appointment for the child.

That is compared to only 11 percent who said they had private insurance.

That is right—those on Medicaid's CHIP were six times more likely to be denied treatment.

And when Medicaid was accepted, the children had to wait, on average, 22 days longer than those with private insurance.

Researchers blame low Medicaid payments, delays in paying, and bureaucratic redtape driving doctors from even accepting these patients.

As a former Governor, I can tell you that these problems have long plagued the Medicaid Program.

Yet in 2014 the President's new law dramatically expands Medicaid, dumping over 24 million more Americans onto this very broken system. How can the President promise guaranteed coverage for these millions of Americans when this study shows the majority of our most vulnerable population is denied treatment under the Medicaid system? The bottom line is you cannot receive care if you cannot find a doctor to provide it. The logic simply does not match the promise.

Another recent study by the consulting group McKinsey & Company calls another one of the President's guarantees into question. Their study analyzed the impact of the health care law on employer-sponsored benefits.

Prior to the health care law, America's employers were the backbone of our Nation's health care system, providing 165 million Americans with health care coverage. The McKinsey study found that 30 percent of employers will definitely or probably stop offering their employees health care insurance after 2014.

During the health care debate, supporters of the law insisted that the law builds on the principle of employer-sponsored coverage.

The President even repeatedly promised if you like your plan, you can keep it. But again, this appears to be an empty promise.

According to the study—and others that came before it—employees will be stripped of plans that they like and dumped onto the new law's health care exchanges to fend for themselves.

I realize there is some disagreement surrounding this particular study. But how can we deny this commonsense logic?

The more you know about this law, the more you conclude it just does not make sense for employers to offer a health care plan.

Beginning in 2014, the health care law mandates that employers with more than 50 workers offer health insurance coverage or pay a penalty of \$2,000 per worker. And with this mandate comes a slew of other requirements. Suddenly dropping coverage and paying the \$2,000 penalty becomes an economic necessity.

During the health care debate, I spoke about this on the Senate floor. I and many others warned that the proposed penalties for businesses would create a perverse incentive. When you do the math, I said back then this is no penalty at all, compared to the cost of private insurance.

It is a wise business decision if you are worried about the bottom line. That is how the law encourages employers to dump their employees onto the exchange.

A Deloitte consultant told the Associated Press, "I don't know if the intent was to find an exit strategy for providing benefits, but the bill as written provides the mechanism." John Deere has responded by saying businesses will look into "just paying the